



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement of Response to EU Statement on the Death Penalty

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 23, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We take note of the statement by The European Union concerning the death penalty in the United States and the pending execution of Mr. John Elliott.

Having spoken at some length last week on this very issue, I shall just confine my statements today in noting that in a democratic society, the criminal justice system, including the punishments prescribed for the most serious crimes, should reflect the will of the people, freely expressed and appropriately implemented.

In the United States, the use of the death penalty is a decision left to democratically elected governments at the federal level and at the level of each individual state, which in this case is the State of Texas.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.